

REMARKS

In reply to the Final Office Action of July 16, 2003, the applicant submits the following remarks. Claims 1-3, 10, 17, 31, 41, 86 and 89-92 have been amended. Claim 94 has been cancelled. Claims 95-100 have been added. No new matter has been added. Claims 1-5, 86-93 and 95-100 are pending after entry of this amendment. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration in view of the foregoing amendment and these remarks.

Section 112 Rejections

Claims 41 is rejected based on 35 U.S.C. § 112, ¶ 2, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claim 41 has been amended to remove indefinite terms.

Claim 94 is rejection based on 35 U.S.C. § 112, ¶ 4, as being an improper dependent claim for failing to include every limitation of a claim from which it depends. Claim 94 has been cancelled.

Section 102 Rejections

Claim 1-17 and 31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent Number 6,198,217 ("Suzuki"). The applicant respectfully disagrees, because Suzuki fails to disclose the elements of amended claim 1.

Amended claim 1 recites a device including a substrate with at least two active components on the top surface of the substrate. The active components are separated by at least one non-active region. A laminate over the top surface of the substrate encapsulates at least the active components. At least one support post in the non-active regions provides support for the laminate.

Suzuki shows an electroluminescent unit U formed on a substrate 24 and covered by a protective layer P having barrier layers 20, 22 (Figs. 1 and 2, column 2, lines 55-62). The electroluminescent unit U and protective layer P can be covered by a member 30 which is

bonded to the substrate 24 with an adhesive 32 (Fig. 2, column 7, lines 49-60, line 53 states "adhesive 30", the applicant believes this is a typographical error and should be "adhesive 32").

Although Suzuki shows an element over an electroluminescent unit, the element only encapsulates a single electroluminescent unit. Suzuki does not show at least two active components which are encapsulated by a laminate where support posts provide support for the laminate. Nor does Suzuki show support posts in a non-active region separating active components. For at least the above stated reason, the applicant asserts that Suzuki does not anticipate amended claim 1. Claim 2-17 and 31 depend directly or indirectly from claim 1 and for the same reason are similarly not anticipated.

Section 103 Rejections

Claims 86-94 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Suzuki in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,198,217 ("Harper"). The applicant submits that the amended claims are not obvious in light of Suzuki and Harper.

Claims 86-93 depend directly or indirectly from claim 1 and therefore include the elements of claim 1, as described above. Harper does not show at least two active components which are encapsulated by a laminate where support posts provide support for the laminate. Nor does Harper show support posts in a non-active region separating active components. Because the cited references fail to disclose or suggest at least these features, the applicant submits that no *prima facie* showing of obviousness has been established with respect to these claims, which are therefore allowable over the combination of Suzuki and Harper.

Additions to the Specification

Additions to the specification, including FIG. 6 and the new paragraphs, are found at page 5, line 23 through page 7, line 7 and Fig. 1 of WO 01/04963, which was incorporated into this application by reference. No new matter has been added.